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With malice toward none

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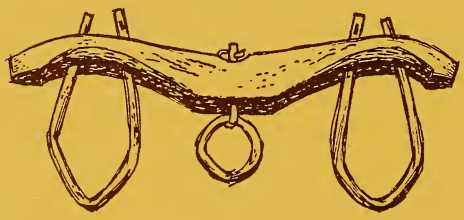

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ROUND TABLE

"With Malice toward None"

A Radio Discussion by AVERY O. CRAVEN
J. G. RANDALL *and* T. V. SMITH

Including
A Special Supplement on Abraham Lincoln

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Around the Round Table . . . .

AVERY O. CRAVEN, professor of American history at the University of Chicago, was born in North Carolina and educated at Simpson College (Iowa), Harvard University, and the University of Chicago. Before joining the faculty on Chicago's Midway, he had taught at the College of Emporia, Michigan State College, and the University of Illinois. In history his field of specialization has been the study of the South and West and particularly of the Civil War. In addition, Professor Craven is an expert on conservation and soil problems. He was president of the American Agricultural Society in 1930 and in recent years has been a lecturer for the United States Department of Agriculture. He is the co-author of *Sources of Culture in the Middle West* and author of *Soil Exhaustion in Virginia and Maryland* (1925); *Edmund Ruffin: Southerner* (1931); *To Markie* (1933); *The Repressible Conflict* (1939); and *The Coming of the Civil War* (1942).

JAMES G. RANDALL, professor of history at the University of Illinois, studied at Butler College and received his A.M. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of Chicago. He taught history and political science at Illinois College, the University of Michigan, Syracuse University, and Butler College before joining the department of history at the University of Illinois in 1920. Professor Randall served as a special expert with the United States Shipping Board during World War I, and he was a member of the Public Archives Commission from 1926 to 1931. He has written articles on Lincoln and the Civil War period for various magazines and professional journals and is the author of *Confiscation of Property during the Civil War* (1913); *Constitutional Problems under Lincoln* (1926); *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (1937); and is the joint editor of *Democracy in the Middle West* (1941) and *Lincoln the President: Springfield to Gettysburg* (in press).

LIEUTENANT COLONEL T. V. SMITH, on leave as professor of philosophy at the University of Chicago, is a native of Texas and did his undergraduate work and received his A.B. degree at the University of Texas. His A.M. and Ph.D. degrees he received at the University of Chicago. Before coming to the University of Chicago, Colonel Smith taught at Texas Christian University and the University of Texas. He served two terms in the Illinois State Legislature and from 1939 to 1941 was United States Congressman-at-Large from Illinois. Recently Colonel Smith returned from Italy, where he served with the Allied Military Government. Colonel Smith is the author of many books, among which are: *The Democratic Way of Life* (1925); *The American Philosophy of Equality* (1926); *Philosophers Speak for Themselves* (1934); *The Promise of American Politics* (1936); *Lincoln: Living Legend* (1940); *The Legislative Way of Life* (1940); and *The Democratic Tradition in America* (1941).

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"With Malice toward None"

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Colonel Smith: The birthday of some men is merely an exercise in grateful memory, but Lincoln's recurring birthday is a challenge to our imagination also. He appeals no more to the head of the scholar than to the heart of the citizen.

Mr. Craven: That very fact emphasizes the difference between the historical figure and the growing legendary Lincoln. He is more and more becoming the symbol of America itself. Perhaps he is becoming even more than that.

Mr. Randall: Yes, indeed, he is. As America has broadened its international significance, Lincoln has become increasingly a world figure.

Colonel Smith: The poet has said that each age is a dream that is passing or one that is coming to birth; each national hero is an institution that is passing or one that is born anew. Let us try our hand at a sort of natural history of the growth of a great national inspiration from a humble man.

Mr. Craven: Let us begin with the fact that there have been more than four thousand items produced on Abraham Lincoln.

Colonel Smith: Four thousand!

Mr. Craven: And there are at least a thousand volumes dealing directly with the man himself.

MR. CRAVEN: And southerners, in 1860, almost ignored him. I remember that the *Richmond Enquirer* said that "Lincoln is little more than a cipher in the present count." A New Orleans newspaper said that he was the "beau ideal of the restless, dogged, free-soil border ruffian, a vulgar mobocrat and southern hater" who would neither turn back from his work nor do it by halves.

COLONEL SMITH: The southerners did not even fear him, except as a tool of what they thought adverse interests. But the northerners themselves had an adverse view, did they not?

MR. RANDALL: Yes, do not forget that. He was unmercifully abused in the North. He was referred to, for instance, as a "baboon," an "imbecile," a "wet rag," a "Kentucky mule," a "simple Susan."

COLONEL SMITH: Worse still, as I remember, the abolitionists, who were the professional idealists of the time, characterized him as a middleman between a very modest right and the most arrogant and exacting wrong.

MR. CRAVEN: To a certain extent is there not some justification for the feeling that, in 1860, Lincoln had not justified himself as a great Olympian figure such as he has become?

COLONEL SMITH: I was certainly surprised, as a southerner who had venerated Lincoln, when I looked up in the *Journals* of the Illinois Legislature his record for the eight years that he was in the Lower House. I give you my word, I could not find anything that lifted him above the level of a job broker or an introducer of formal resolutions. He was really a nonentity during those early four years.

MR. CRAVEN: And his record in Congress really was not much better, was it?

MR. RANDALL: That certainly is true. Lincoln's career was me-

diocre in terms of accomplishments in the Illinois Legislature and in Congress. He, by the age of fifty-two, had done little, in fact, in office. Yet, strangely enough, you will find that at the age of twenty-nine, Lincoln gave a mature and thoughtful pronouncement on fundamentals in his address before the Young Men's Lyceum in Springfield on January 27, 1838. In that early statement the young Lincoln gave a real interpretation of American institutions. In that sense the greatness of Lincoln's thought and his stature as a statesman were foreshadowed before he was thirty.[2]

COLONEL SMITH: That is, he was one of these men who matures very slowly—so slowly, in fact, that I wonder if he has even yet reached his full growth.

MR. CRAVEN: That is true. But you are only emphasizing the fact that there is a real Lincoln and that there is a legendary Lincoln.

COLONEL SMITH: Craven, you and I are old friends on the University of Chicago ROUND TABLE. I wonder if you would be willing now to interrupt me just as little as possible for a while. Then I will let you have the microphone to discuss Lincoln as a national figure and let Randall have it to discuss Lincoln as an international figure.

In the meantime, I will improve the opportunity and return the favor by doing my best to explain what men as individuals see in Lincoln to make him appear as their own better selves. The key to my thought is that Lincoln was a sadly divided personality.

MR. CRAVEN: Even if true, that is a flaw to be remedied, not a virtue for men to emulate.

COLONEL SMITH: You do not yet discern my deeper thought. You see, we are all divided selves, and so we naturally project our-

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[2] See excerpts from this speech in the supplement on pages 20–21.

selves in every prominent personality that is sadly split, as Lincoln's personality was. True, we do not all come, as Lincoln did, to Hamlet's stark dilemma: "To be or not to be." But men who do brave this abyss and then hold onto life and make a go of it excite our admiration and strengthen our human courage. In this regard, Lincoln's success story is more of the inner than of the outer life. That is one chief reason, I suspect, why the poets and the preachers and the philosophers have idolized this sad man. Life is too much with every one of us and is too much for us. Lincoln looked over the brink and lived. He, therefore, became a sort of elder brother to each of us who knows the shadows and walks alone through the silences of life.

MR. RANDALL: Smith has a point there, though he puts it more poetically than I would. Look how Lincoln was divided about women, for instance. "I can never be satisfied," he once said, "with anyone who would be blockhead enough to have me."

COLONEL SMITH: Mary Todd lived to learn how true was Lincoln's knowledge of himself about women.

MR. CRAVEN: As I reflect upon your point about Lincoln's split personality, perhaps you will let me say that his conscience was also a little split. You remember his puzzling remark about slavery: "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is. . . . . And yet I have never understood that the presidency conferred upon me an unrestricted right to act officially upon this judgment and feeling."

COLONEL SMITH: Craven, like an old friend, you are really helping me! That is the proof of my point—proof and paradox together. He was so divided in conscience, as a matter of fact, that, though slavery was wrong, he also thought it wrong for him to right it. To make the matter more paradoxical still, Lincoln saw how divided

a personality he was. He wrote a Shakespearean actor from the White House, for instance: "I have endured a great deal of ridicule without much malice, and have received a great deal of kindness, not quite free from ridicule. I am used to it." In such self-knowledge, Lincoln became our elder brother in wisdom as well as in sadness. He saw the figure which he cut and smiled a healing smile. He saw what a sorry figure the world itself cuts, and yet he kept his courage to live—yea, to live greatly. His humor kept him from meanness, but it was his imagination that saved him for magnanimity.

Imagination put him in other men's places, so that he could meet them more than halfway. But it also gave him a cause that saved him from wobbling—a polestar for the politician in him—and a cause big enough to unite his severed selves in action and roomy enough to offer shelter to North and South alike. The cause which cured his personal malady was not the abolition of slavery; it was rather the preservation of the Union. Men love what they lack; and Lincoln so lacked personal unity as to make a religion of national union.

MR. RANDALL: I recall in this connection his famous letter to Greeley: "What I do about slavery," he said, "I do because I believe it helps to save the Union. . . . . I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. . . . ."[3]

COLONEL SMITH: The style of that quotation helps me to round out my thought. Lincoln's greatness, I have long suspected, owes not a little to accident—to the manner and the moment of his death: martyrdom at a climactic hour! It was like Socrates and Jesus. But Lincoln had already unconsciously insured himself against oblivion, as neither of them had, by writing in a style which keeps him

[3] See Lincoln's letter to Horace Greeley on pages 18–19.

alive in death and eloquent through endless absence. He discerned what psychologists have discovered—that the surest way to move other men is visibly to control your own emotion. The genius of Lincoln's style is reticence, not full release. Lincoln did at Gettysburg in two minutes for all ages what the orator of that occasion could not do for the auditors there in two hours. Lincoln's style, through its very economy, reveals what it conceals—the ache of the heart, the throb of the brain, and the bitter salt of oceans of sorrow. As Sandburg says, he was "sad," he was "kind," he was "cool." I defy any man to read Lincoln's speeches or letters—with or without tears—and not to feel himself bodily budged through comradeship into greatness. His style, which is the man, reinforces the deepest lesson of Jefferson: that in a democracy men are not privileged to cure their divided selves, as strident reformers would, by inflicting their notions even of perfection upon other men, save only through persuasion. His "idiomatic western genius," as Whitman calls it, makes us somehow to know that, though there is deep division between the unwinged angel in each of us and the animal fierce with ambition, we may still live greatly, as he did, in the plenitude of our privacy and mitigate in action, as he did, man's inhumanity to man through unfailing magnanimity.

Mr. Craven: You have emphasized the importance of Lincoln for the individual and the way in which he feels a need. But the United States, as a nation, also found in Abraham Lincoln the materials with which to satisfy a great and permanent need—a need great enough to turn cold reality into a warm and growing tradition. George Eliot once remarked to the effect that the greatest service a great man ever renders his nation is in being a great man. Only a nation's heroes express and inspire the best that is in a people. So Lincoln has come to symbolize to the American people the meaning of America itself—its opportunities, its virtues, its mission. He is

the great American success story. It reveals the land of opportunity where a boy may start from the poverty and squalor of the three-sided log-cabin and find his way, by sheer merit, to the White House and the highest office in the land. His are the homely virtues which Americans like to believe are the national virtues—honesty, hard labor, a keen sense of humor, a selfless devotion to right. In him democracy finds justification. Without distinguished ancestry he reached true gentility; without formal education, he penned the immortal Gettysburg Address, which you have mentioned; with only the experience of a cross-roads politician, he rose to the statesmanship required to steer a nation through its bitterest crisis.

Lincoln is the great commoner who never lost the human touch. He hated privilege and believed in the right of every man to eat the bread his toil produced. He would keep slavery out of the territories, because where slavery went common man could not find homes; he would destroy the institution of slavery itself, because it carried a threat to the freedom of all men alike.

Colonel Smith: "This is a world of compensation," as he said, "and he who would be no slave must consent to have no slaves. Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves and under a just God cannot long retain it."

Mr. Craven: Was this interest in common man a mere politician's gesture? The idea that the "plain people" are the chief concern of government was the bedrock of all his political thinking. As Stephenson says: "The latent fanaticism that is in every man, or almost every man, was grounded in Lincoln, on his faith, so whimsically expressed—that 'God must have loved the plain people because he had made so many of them.' "[4] Thus, while other men

[4] See N. W. Stephenson, *Lincoln: An Account of His Personal Life* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1930).

blundered into civil war babbling about constitutional rights, economic interests, and Negro slavery, Lincoln saw the struggle in terms of humanity's age-old fight for freedom—a fight to save the Union because that union was dedicated to the proposition that all men—not just Negroes, not just Americans even, but all men everywhere—were created free and equal.

MR. RANDALL: He said, you remember, that "this is essentially a people's contest. On the side of the Union it is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men; to lift artificial weights from all shoulders; to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all; to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life."

MR. CRAVEN: In that statement he lifted the Civil War into a monument to assert the sovereignty of "we, the people."

It is as the great democrat that the Lincoln of history justifies the Lincoln of tradition. The significance of America to mankind is as an experiment in democracy. And in Lincoln's day that experiment was failing. Southern men boldly talked of the superior society with slave mud-sills at the bottom and an aristocracy at the top. "Inequality among men is the will of God," declared the president of Randolph-Macon College. "I have no hesitation in pronouncing the dogma that all men are created equal false and absurd," said Professor Mills of Mercer. "It is both false and foolish," echoed the venerable Edmund Ruffin. George Fitzhugh of Virginia went even further to insist that "slavery is the natural condition of the laboring man, whether black or white. . . . . Master and slave is a relation in society as natural and necessary as parent and child."[5]

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[5] See Avery O. Craven, *Edmund Ruffin: Southerner* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1931), and Harvey Wish, *George M. Fitzhugh* (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1944).

More clearly than any man of his day Abraham Lincoln saw the full meaning of these words. The white man's freedom was as much involved as that of the Negro's. Common men everywhere were endangered. And it was in this way that Lincoln rose above the time and the things of the moment to become the great spokesman of mankind.

Lincoln, like De Tocqueville, thus saw America more than America—the image of democracy itself. He truly constituted himself the spokesman, as he said, of "the whole family of men," for all time and for all places. And that, too, has become a part of America.

MR. RANDALL: As I understand it, then, Craven, you would emphasize Lincoln as the great commoner—the phenomenally popular hero who lives because he epitomizes America and embodies American ideals—while Smith gives us Lincoln himself as the philosopher sees him, balancing his outer and inner personality, his clarity in seeing the significance of his own leadership and his own relation to the problems of his day.

My thinking has been chiefly on Lincoln's significance in the world picture. It is not only in America that Lincoln is honored. There are lives of Lincoln in foreign languages the world over. In 1863 there was a veritable outpouring of popular demonstration for Lincoln among the workmen and common people of England. It was like a tidal wave that swept over Britain. And, of course, we remember the deep friendship and understanding between Lincoln and that outstanding British liberal, John Bright.[6] After Lincoln's death, you remember, *Punch* of London printed a beautifully poetic tribute. They had been abusing him; now they made amends and did it handsomely.

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[6] For a discussion of the likeness in political and social views see James G. Randall, "Lincoln and John Bright," *Yale Review*, winter, 1945.

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MR. CRAVEN: And from all over the world, at the time of his death, there poured in from common people in every country expressions of sorrow and personal loss.

MR. RANDALL: We have, then, to account somehow for this world appeal of Lincoln. I would say that much of his larger significance is due to two things—his liberalism and his concept of peace. It is true that Lincoln was a conservative in not going along with the intolerant anti-southern "radicals" of his day, but, basically, the mind of Lincoln on public questions was a liberal mind. He had a fundamental creed of human dignity and human equality. He had a sense of equity and justice. He gave thought to the laborer and to people without privilege.

COLONEL SMITH: Was it not Lincoln who characterized the "mud-sill theory" as the theory that whoever is a hired laborer is fixed in that condition for life?

MR. RANDALL: That is right. Those were his words. He said, in the same connection, that the laborer should not be "a blind horse upon a treadmill." He warned of a tendency that is like what we now call fascism—that is, employing lawless terrorism to overthrow legitimate government. He did not merely prate about democracy; but, on the other hand, when he saw its imperfections, he did not lose faith because democracy is difficult. In his liberalism he should be noted for the things that he avoided. He did not play up passions. He was never the rabble-rouser or professional patrioteer. He did not go in for intolerance or abuse of the South. He kept clear of violent movements in his own day. He was anti-slavery on the plane of reasonable statesmanship, not on the plane of John Brown. He not only had a democratic American faith and a sense of American unity, but he also believed that the cause of America was the cause of free government in the world.

MR. CRAVEN: From what you say I am wondering if you would pin on Abraham Lincoln that much-abused term "idealist"—that is, I mean, implying the impractical man.

MR. RANDALL: I would do it circumspectly. I would certainly say that Lincoln was a man of ideals. In fact, ideals are the essence of the Lincoln subject. Sometimes we tend to say that a leader has ideals; we call him an "idealist," perhaps a "visionary dreamer," and dismiss him with that. Or sometimes we pin the wrong labels upon people and call the wrong ones "realists." After all, what is a leader without ideals? It is when we follow the lead of negative men that we fall into disaster. We do not have to be perfectionists, either. It has been said that ideals are like stars—we do not reach them, but we do steer by them. Our real leaders are those who do not set their sights too low; they are men who remember with Herbert Agar that there is "a time for greatness."

Lincoln lived through one crisis and one crushing Union defeat after another in four fearful years in office and came through "with malice toward none." Only a man of ideals could have done that.

MR. CRAVEN: "With malice toward none" was the cornerstone of Lincoln's peace, was it not?

MR. RANDALL: Yes, Lincoln labored hard to promote a forward-looking plan of peace. It envisaged the rapid healing of wounds between North and South. Other leaders than Lincoln, however, failed to rise to his level, and that is what hurt him, as we see in the last speech of his life, which he made on April 11, 1865. Lincoln was not worried about the southern mind. His appeal in that last speech was to the North. The real tug—and this is a thing to be greatly emphasized—was to get his own government, especially Congress, to rally to the program of a constructive postwar policy. The great tragedy, as with Wilson, was the failure of high-minded

unity behind Lincoln's plan of peace. His plan failed—that is to say, it failed to be adopted and a wretchedly abusive form of so-called "reconstruction" was adopted—but it was not Lincoln's failure.[7]

In two great crises in the history of our nation—under Lincoln and even more devastatingly under Wilson—it has been true that smaller men with inadequate vision have wrecked the well-planned peace policy of the nation's leader.

MR. CRAVEN: All three of us have been trying painfully to catch Lincoln; and yet, somehow or other, I have the feeling that something of the mystery of greatness and something of the stature of the man escapes us—something which I think that you caught, Smith, in your memorial to the Illinois Senate a few years ago. Would you close with that?

COLONEL SMITH: Thank you, Craven, and thank you for your contribution today, Randall.

"No man made great by death offers more hope to lowly pride than does Abraham Lincoln; for while living he was himself so simple as often to be dubbed a fool—North and South. Foolish he was, they said, in losing his youthful heart to a grave and living his life on married patience; foolish in pitting his homely ignorance against Douglas, brilliant, courtly, and urbane; foolish in setting himself to do the right in a world where the day goes mostly to the strong; foolish in dreaming of freedom for a long-suffering folk whom the North is as anxious to keep out as the South was to keep down; foolish in choosing the silent Grant to lead to victory the hesitant armies of the North; foolish, finally, in presuming that government for the people must be government of the people and by the people. . . . .

"This Lincoln, whom so many living friends and foes alike deemed foolish, hid his bitterness in laughter; fed his sympathy on solitude;

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[7] See page 22.

and met recurring disaster with whimsicality to muffle the murmur of a bleeding heart. Out of the tragic sense of life he pitied where others blamed; bowed his own shoulders with the woes of the weak; endured humanely his little day of chance power; and won through death what life disdains to bestow upon such simple souls—lasting peace and everlasting glory."

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Excerpts from

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S WRITINGS AND SPEECHES

On Slavery

If A can prove, however conclusively, that he may of right enslave B, why may not B snatch the same argument and prove equally that he may enslave A? You say A is white and B is black. It is color, then; the lighter having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule you are to be slave to the first man you meet with a fairer skin than your own. You do not mean color exactly? You mean the whites are intellectually the superiors of the blacks, and therefore have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule you are to be slave to the first man you meet with an intellect superior to your own. But, say you, it is a question of interest, and if you make it your interest you have the right to enslave another. Very well. And if he can make it his interest he has the right to enslave you.—*Fragment, July, 1854 (?).*

.... I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and the black races. There is a physical difference between the two, which in my judgment, will probably forever forbid their living together upon the footing of perfect equality; and inasmuch as it becomes a necessity that there must be a difference, I, as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong having the superior position. I have never said anything to the contrary, but I hold that notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence—the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . . . . I agree with Judge Douglas he is not my equal in

many respects—certainly not in color, perhaps not in moral or intellectual endowment. But in the right to eat bread, without the leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man. . . . .—*Lincoln-Douglas Debate, 1858.*

". . . . A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new, North as well as South. . . . .—*Speech to the Illinois Convention which nominated him to United States Senate, 1858.*

. . . . It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time; and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says, "You toil and work and earn bread, and I'll eat it." No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle. . . . . (Quoted in John G. Nicolay and John Hay [eds.], *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln* [New York: Appleton-Century Co., 1905], V, 65.)

. . . . If slavery is right, all words, acts, laws, and constitutions against it are themselves wrong, and should be silenced and swept away. If it is right, we cannot justly object to its nation-

ality—its universality; if it is wrong, they cannot justly insist upon its extension—its enlargement. All they ask we could readily grant, if we thought slavery right; all we ask they could readily grant, if they thought it wrong. Their thinking it right and our thinking it wrong is the precise fact upon which depends the whole controversy. Thinking it right, as they do, they are not to blame for desiring its full recognition as being right; but thinking it wrong, as we do, can we yield to them? Can we cast our votes with their view, and against our own? In view of our moral, social, and political responsibilities, can we do this? . . . .—*Speech delivered at Cooper Institute, New York, February 27, 1860.*

Dear Sir:

I have just read yours of the 19th, addressed to myself through the New York "Tribune." If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I may know to be erroneous, I do not, now and here, controvert them. If there be in it any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not, now and here, argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that.

What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.—*Letter to Horace Greeley, August 22, 1862.*

On Preservation of the Union

. . . . The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We say we are for the Union. The world will not forget that we say this. We know how to save the Union. The world knows we do know how to save it. We—even we here—hold the power and bear the responsibility. In giving freedom to the slave, we assume freedom to the free—honorable alike in what we give and what we preserve. We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope of earth. Other means may succeed; this could not fail. The way is plain, peaceful, generous, just—a way which, if followed, the world will forever applaud, and God must forever bless. . . . .—*Annual Message to Congress, 1862.*

. . . . Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satis-

factory after separation than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws among friends? . . . . (Quoted in Nicolay and Hay, *op. cit.*, VI, 181.)

On Government

. . . . Any people anywhere being inclined and having the power have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right—a right which we hope and believe is to liberate the world. Nor is this right confined to cases in which the whole people of an existing government may choose to exercise it. Any portion of such people that can may revolutionize and make their own of so much of the territory as they inhabit. More than this, a majority of any portion of such people may revolutionize, putting down a minority, intermingled with or near about them, who may oppose this movement. Such a minority was precisely the case of the Tories of our own revolution. It is a quality of revolutions not to go by old lines or old laws; but to break up both, and make new ones. . . . . (Quoted in *ibid.*, I, 338–39.)

. . . . When men take it in their heads today to hang gamblers or burn murderers, they should recollect that in the confusion usually attending such transactions they will be as likely to hang or burn some one who is neither a gambler nor a murderer as one who is, and that, acting upon the example they set, the mob of tomorrow may, and probably will, hang or burn some of them by the very same mistake. And not only so; the innocent, those who have ever set their faces against violations of law in every shape, alike with the guilty fall victims to the ravages of mob law; and thus it goes up, step by step, till all the walls erected for the defense of the persons and property of individuals are trodden down and disregarded. . . . . Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his posterity swear by

the blood of the Revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor—let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, spelling-books, and in almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. . . . .—*Speech before the Young Men's Lyceum, Springfield, Illinois, January 27, 1838.*

On Workers

. . . . Nor should this lead to a war upon property, or the owners of property. Property is the fruit of labor; property is desirable; is a positive good in the world. That some should be rich shows that others may become rich, and hence is just encouragement to industry and enterprise. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him work diligently and build one for himself, thus by example assuring that his own shall be safe from violence when built. . . . .—*Lecture to Workingmen's Association of New York, 1864.*

. . . . What is the true condition of the laborer? I take it that it is best for all to leave each man free to acquire property as fast as he can. Some will get wealthy. I don't believe in a law to prevent a man from getting rich; it would do more harm than good. So while we do not propose any war upon capital, we do wish to allow the humblest man an equal chance to get rich with everybody else. When one starts poor, as most do in the race of life, free society is such that he knows he can better his condition;

he knows that there is no fixed condition of labor for his whole life. . . . .—*Speech, New Haven, 1860.*

On Peace

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.—*First Inaugural Address, 1861.*

. . . . With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace between ourselves, and with all nations. . . . .—*Second Inaugural Address, 1865.*

. . . . We all agree that the seceded States, so called, are out of their proper practical relation with the Union, and that the sole object of the government, civil and military, in regard to those States is to again get them into that proper practical relation. I believe that it is not only possible, but in fact easier, to do this without deciding or even considering whether these States have ever been out of the Union, than with it. Finding themselves safely at home, it would be utterly immaterial whether they had ever been abroad. Let us all join in doing the acts necessary to restoring the proper practical relations between these States and the Union, and each forever after innocently indulge his own opinion whether in doing the acts he brought the States from without into the Union, or only gave them proper assistance, they never having been out of it. . . . .—*Last public address, White House, April 11, 1865.*

What Do *You* Think?

1. In your opinion, is it particularly appropriate that Abraham Lincoln be honored in the midst of the present war?

2. Discuss the relationship, if any, between the concept of unconditional surrender in the present war and those who fought for the same unconditional surrender in the Civil War, in the light of Lincoln's ideal of "With malice toward none. . . . ."

3. Are the "two Lincolns"—that is, the actual man in office and the legend that has come to be in the eighty years since his assassination—widely divergent, similar, or inseparable?

4. What is the value of a legend such as Lincoln in the life of a people? Do we, as a nation, strive more grandly for ideals because we have had Lincoln, or do we simply use him to add eloquence on special occasions to our own particular interests?

5. Do you agree with Colonel Smith that Lincoln sought unity of his own divided personality in the ideal of preserving the Union of the North and South?

6. Professor Craven finds in Lincoln "the great American success story." To what extent do you think that concept of "from log cabin to White House" has been an asset to understanding the meaning of democracy?

7. Discuss Professor Randall's assertions concerning Lincoln's liberalism—the meaning of the term "liberalism" as used in that context and as we use it today.

8. Is there a valid warning in Professor Randall's parallel between the defeat of Lincoln's peace and the defeat of Wilson's peace for the peace to come?

More on This Topic

"Abraham Lincoln," *Fortune*, February, 1944. *Says that he is speaking today, as he then spoke to Europe's democrats.*

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PARRINGTON, VERNON LOUIS. *Main Currents in American Thought.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1939. *Incisive analysis of the conflicts of American democratic thought.*

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The People Say....

The following letters are representative of the views expressed by the ROUND TABLE *audience on "China—Weak Link in the United Nations?" broadcast February 4, 1945.*

*

A Stumbling Block

It seems to me that the internal weakness of China is likely to be one of the stumbling blocks in the way of postwar harmony between Russian and Anglo-American policies and ambitions.—*A listener from Muncie, Indiana.*

*

Useful and Instructive

Last Sunday's discussion of China I found both useful and instructive. I especially liked the explanation of the internal strife and the position of the Generalissimo. I hope that this subject can be broadened in a future program to include more details about the Communist movement.—*A listener from Boston, Massachussetts.*

*

Disappointed by Omission

I think that many of your listeners to today's discussion on China must have been disappointed at your omission of two weaknesses that stand out very prominently in China today: (1) inability or unwillingness of the Chungking government to curb inflation, black markets, and unrestrained profiteering of big landowners and industrialists; (2) dissipation of strength in fighting the Communists—even to the use of Lend-Lease materials for this purpose.

Many correspondents familiar with the situation in China have repeatedly commented upon the degree of democracy in Communist China in contrast with the lack of real democracy in the Chungking government.

Please do not underestimate the intelligence and knowledge of conditions in the world of your air audience. —*A listener from Oak Park, Illinois.*

*

Let Us Speak Honestly

Why could you not honestly tell the people of the United States about China's weakness? Why not say that she has not had planes, trucks, and all the other thousands of items to fight or win a war with? Or why not point out that for seven years she has lived on promises, for while the people of the United States were led to believe that we were really aiding China, acually we did next to nothing? Russia, as a matter of fact, has supplied her with more than three times the amounts furnished by us.....

China's strength lies in the fact that she has the men and the will to move a whole capital fifteen hundred miles and to move the whole industrial skeleton of China, besides the museum pieces, libraries, government personnel, and so on..... This great nation did all this because she had hope in her heart and because she honestly believed that she would be joined by this country of ours. Let us not fail.....—*A listener from Chicago, Illinois.*

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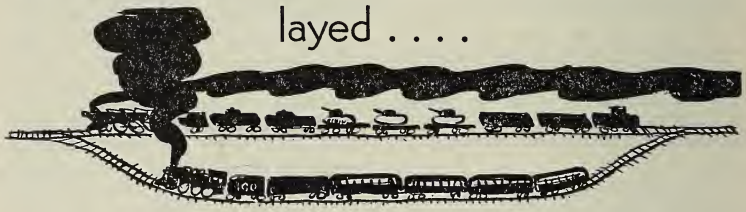

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Buffalo, N.Y.	WBEN	930	Norfolk, Va.	WTAR	790
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Chicago, Ill.	WMAQ	670	New Orleans, La.	WSMB	1350
Des Moines, Iowa	WHO	1040	North Platte, Neb.	KODY	1240
Duluth, Minn., and Superior, Wis.	WEBC	1320	Pittsburg, Kan.	KOAM	810
Evansville, Ind.	WGBF	1280	Saginaw, Mich.	WSAM	1230
Fargo, N.D.	WDAY	970	St. Cloud, Minn.	KFAM	1450
Grand Rapids, Mich.	WOOD	1300	Shreveport, La.	KTBS	1480
Hibbing, Minn.	WMFG	1240	Springfield, Mo.	KGBX	1260
La Crosse, Wis.	WKBH	1410	Terre Haute, Ind.	WBOW	1230
Lake Charles, La.	KPLC	1490	Tulsa, Okla.	KVOO	1170
Memphis, Tenn.	WMC	790	Virginia, Minn.	WHLB	1400
Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn.	KSTP	1500	Wichita, Kan.	KANS	1240

11:30 A.M. MOUNTAIN WAR TIME

Albuquerque, N.M.	KOB	770	Phoenix, Ariz.	KTAR	620
Bozeman, Mont.	KRBM	1450	Pocatello, Idaho	KSEI	930
Butte, Mont.	KGIR	1370	Prescott, Ariz.	KYCA	1490
Denver, Colo.	KOA	850	Salt Lake City, Utah	KDYL	1320
Helena, Mont.	KPFA	1240	Yuma, Ariz.	KYUM	1240

10:30 A.M. PACIFIC WAR TIME

Fresno, Calif.	KMJ	580	San Diego, Calif.	KFSD	600
Los Angeles, Calif.	KFI	640	Seattle, Wash.	KOMO	950
Medford, Ore.	KMED	1440	Spokane, Wash.	KHQ	590
Portland, Ore.	KGW	620			

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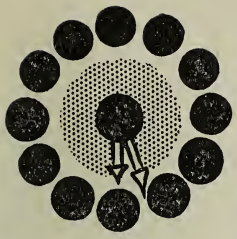

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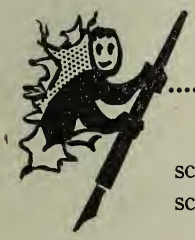

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